

Working Toward April 1 'Fire-up'

"Old 618" Steam Engine

10-14-92

It took about 2-1/2 days last week for five men to remove all the asbestos from "Old 618", the steam engine that will be the flagship of the Heber Valley Historic Railroad when it begins to operate next spring.

Keers Environmental, Inc. covered the engine with a "tent" of two layers of polyurethane sheeting, set up a system to create negative pressure inside the tent by continually drawing out the air, which was filtered through high-efficiency filters before it was released outside, free of any contamination, explained Kevin Black, project manager. Then the

crew, dressed in protective clothing and respirators, wet down the asbestos before clipping the wires that held the asbestos in place and removing the two-inch wide asbestos bricks by hand. The material was put into plastic bags, washed,

and put into second bags, and will ultimately be deposited in an EPA approved landfill in New Mexico that's owned by the company, said Mr. Black.

"We take air samples inside and [monitors]. We also have them outside near the exhaust...It's always been clean," he said.

This week the engine's boiler will be inspected and repaired, and a complete renovation of the engine will begin, said Craig Drury, railroad chief operations engineer. He hopes the new engine house will be built before winter sets in, so he can have "Old 618" ready to fire up and go to work for the railroad by April 1.

The railroad authority wants to start to pour the footings for the building on Nov. 1, but the design engineer, Francis Smith, says that's a little optimistic.



Cancer-causing asbestos was removed from "Old 618" last week and now the serious mechanical work can begin on the flagship of the Heber Valley Historic Railroad.

It would be interesting to know who was the first to insist that it was better to build a long road around a river bend than straighten the river to accommodate a short road. No doubt the person was viewed as an extremist, and appropriately so, and a nut, which also may have been so. But he or she alerted human beings to the fact that natural things like rivers, and their flora and fauna, are important to the balance of our lives as well as to the balance of nature. Because of that first brave extremist, environmental awareness was born and environmental extremists continue to make sure humans can no longer get away with running roughshod over all creation, at least not in this country.

Occupying the chair across the table from any environmentalist is usually a hardnosed developer who's looking for a way to turn a profit. It's those kinds of determined, special interest profitmakers who keep our economy going by providing raw materials that are turned into marketable goods and opening up jobs.

Then that good old American principle of com-

mittee may know a thing about the issue on the table, like how to build an environmentally safe sewer system. But they can count on the extremists and special interest groups to drag in their experts and produce scientific reports, and argue back and forth. All the committee has to do is listen, and think. It may not make a perfect decision, but it will make the best possible decision, surely a much better one than if all those "emotional nuts" hadn't spoken up during the public hearings.

We get as impatient as the next guy when we have to sit through lengthy hearings, listening to extremists and special interest groups reiterate their speeches over and over. But when a thing is done, and we look back on the nerve-wracking process, we have to admit we appreciate them for raising the questions, answering them, and continually keeping them in front of the planners and decision-makers. We hate to think about how some of our local projects would turn out without them on the job, like the Provo Canyon Road, Jordanelle State Park, and the Wasatch County Comprehensive Plan.

Calendar of Events

Oct. 14 (Wednesday) Arthritis Support Group Meeting, 7 p.m., long-term care area at Wasatch County Hospital. Speaker, Carl Jensen.

1992 Deer Hunt Forecast For Utah

The 1992 Utah general season rifle deer hunt opens Saturday Oct.

affected Utah's deer herds in recent